

C.O.C.A. TIMES

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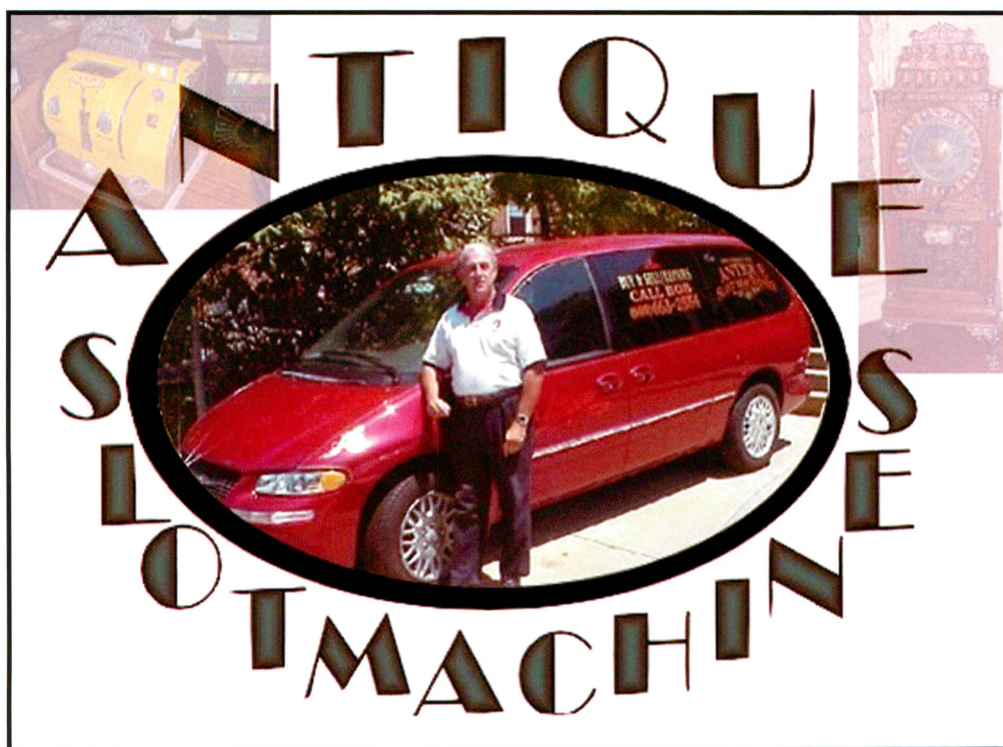
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Message from Our President

Greetings to everyone! Many thanks to Alex Warschaw and John Carini, our past President and V.P., for the great job. I know you will both be there when your new board needs some help. Dan Davids will continue as Treasurer, a tough and time consuming job. Thanks Dan. Jackie Durham V.P. along with Kirk and Susan Beard as co-secretary round out your new executive board.

Your board has been busy examining our club's strengths and weaknesses since taking office in January. We have all witnessed a variety of factors including rising costs, E-bay and the web, busy schedules and much more that have contributed to the perception of value, people put on COCA membership. Like everything else COCA is not immune to change. We are in the process of developing a plan that we hope will not only make our club stronger, but also prepare us to carry COCA into the future.

BE PREPARED! There will be exciting changes ahead beginning with the next meeting in April at the Hilton. If you have not been attending our meetings I strongly urge you to give this one a try. Jackie Durham has been working hard to kick things up a notch and has assured me that you won't be disap-

pointed. Our plans include light refreshments and more fun at the meetings. Stop at the COCA booth on Friday or talk to Jackie at her booth for more details.

In order to make COCA a stronger group we need your input! I hope you will take some time to fill out the survey in this issue. Please note that there is a place to enter your name if you would like to serve on a committee or have special skills that could help the club. This is your club, your time and your money at work for you. If you choose to become an "active member" I guarantee that you will meet more coin-op people, have more fun, and find more stuff! In the short period of time that I have been an "active member" of COCA I have become friends with many wonderful people from across the country. This has also led to the acquisition of some machines that I would not have known about otherwise. There are some truly great people in COCA and you need to spend some time with them.

I am also aware that there are some members who for various reasons only have contact with COCA through The COCA Times. We must find new avenues to enhance their perception of COCA membership value. When our website final-

continued on next page

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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: MAY 12, 2006

ly comes of age this will surely be one of COCA's best benefits. One new idea being considered is a low cost newsletter published three times a year. This coupled with The COCA Times three issues would bring fresh coin-op news to your mailbox every other month.

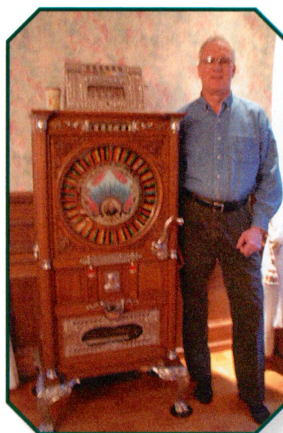
In order to process our survey results and plan for our future we will be forming several committees. Committees being formed include: Convention Planning, Website, Magazine and newsletter, Chicagoland meetings and Budget. Your input will help us form more committees to get the ball rolling.

Our members (currently more than 500) come from all walks of life, and have budgets that vary from pocket change to millions of dollars. The one thing that we all share is our passion for coin-op. If we work together I know that we can find a multitude of new benefits for all of our members. I look forward to talking with you and listening to your comments and concerns at the April meeting. Travel safely and I'll see you in the parking lot at sunrise!

Bill Petrochuk
COCA President

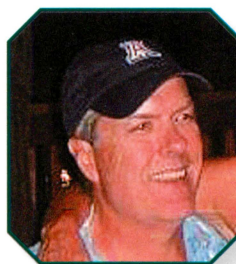


Meet Our New Officers:



Bill Petrochuk
President

Jackie Durham
Vice-President



Dan Davids
Treasurer

Not Shown:
Kirk & Susan Beard
Co-Secretary

- Bernie Nagel -

of White Lake, Michigan
passed away at his home
on January 6th, 2006.

He was 60 years old and an
avid collector of various coin-op
devices, with a passion for vending.
He was involved in the hobby for
over 30 years and a supporter
and member of C.O.C.A.

Our condolences go out to his
wife, Annette, daughter,
family members and friends.
He will be greatly missed!



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CAILLE'S WEIGHT TELLER SCALE - 1903

by JIM and MERLYN COLLINGS



Photo 1



Photo 2

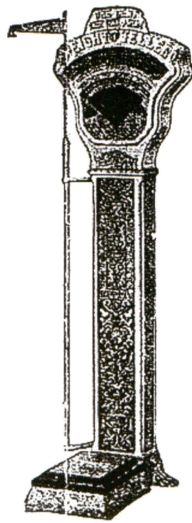


Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5

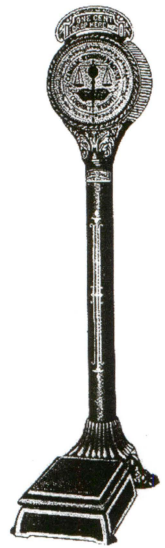


Photo 6

This "Fan Head" Teller scale was manufactured by Caille Bros. of Detroit, Michigan; shortly after their beginnings (photo 1). The scale has an extremely ornate column on all four sides. The cash box blends in nicely with the lavish decorative column. All four sides of the column have a beautiful Caille design which they were famous for (photo 2). This scale column was also used by the Watling Co. (See C.O.C.A. Times (Vol. 1 Issue 2) July 2001). The Teller scale has a height of 72", a width of 19" on the scale head and a depth of 24". It has a total weight of 195 lbs.

There are probably 10 - 15 of these scales known, making it quite scarce. As an extra feature a five pound nickel plated height rod could be purchased. This was a novel and free attraction where the patron could measure his height. This graduated rod was held in place by a cushioning device which prevented it from slipping. The Caille Co. thought this height rod would result it greater profits (photo 3). Most of the Teller scales have been repainted as they were used outdoors. The original colors were enameled green with a silver accent on the designs. The column corners and scale head were painted a bright red. The trim marquee and foot plate were nickel plated.

It's interesting to note that some of the Teller scale foot plates were embossed Bradford Scale Co., which was a distributor, and others were embossed with a flower design. The Bradford Scale Co. also had a name plate at the top of the column,, whereas some of these scales had a name plate which read: The Caille Bros. 10 / Detroit (photo 4). This information was brought to our attention by Jeff Storck, a prominent scale collector

and friend.

The foot plate or platform is nickel plated. The base has a Mexican Onyx or veining design. Protruding on each side of the base are two "Lion" feet which gives the scale greater stability (photo 5).

The fan shaped head of the Teller scale has a nickel-plated marquee which reads: One Cent Drop Coin Here with a finger pointed to the coin entry (photo 4). The unique scale dial is crescent shaped ranging from 25 lbs. to 300 lbs. The scale pointer or indicator is controlled by a clock work friction mechanism that slows down the indicator while registering the weight. A distinctive "whirring" sound is heard as the indicator moves. Below the dial is a triangular window that shows the upper mechanism when it's working. On each side of the triangular window is a height and weight chart for men and women.

The Caille Teller scale is a easy scale to maintain with a double spring mechanism. The earlier Caille Cadillac model had a single spring mechanism. It was equally reliable and easily maintained, but it lacked the lavish styling of the Teller scale (photo 6).

Since our last article on the Three Personal Scales in November 2005, we were informed the children's version of the Rock-Ola Lo Boy Scale, having only 33-1/2" in height, was also made in blue and white porcelain as well as in depression green. Our thanks go to Bernie Nagel who has the white version and Jeff who has the blue version. If any of our readers discover scale variations, please let us know.

HAPPY SCALE COLLECTING!

COVER STORY DISASTERS OF KATRINA

Interview of Peppi Bruneau by Alex Warschaw

INTERVIEW WITH EMILE "PEPPI" BRUNEAU, New Orleans, La. (Attorney at Law since 1966 and also State Representative (Republican) since 1976; certified by Louisiana Courts as an expert on the identification and valuation of antique slot machines).

They say a picture is worth a thousand words, perhaps this will make some of us re-think how "secure" our collections really are. Peppi Bruneau knows firsthand how it feels to lose a lifetime collection in just minutes.

Peppi has been a good friend and has been collecting slot machines in earnest since 1981. On August 29th, his life (along with thousands of others) was changed forever. Hurricane Katrina slammed into the Gulf Coast wiping out the homes and memories of thousands of residents. Thanks to the pictures taken by Anthony J. Schneller, his friend and fellow slot enthusiast, and the willingness of Peppi to share his story perhaps we can soften the blow of an unexpected catastrophic loss, Peppi shares his thoughts and advice with C.O.C.A. in the hopes of sharing others the pain of dealing with this type of loss.

The following are excerpts from a conversation I had with Peppi regarding the emotional and financial impact on his life.

COCA - Is your collection insured?

PEPPI - I thought that it was. Some years ago, I made an inquiry and was advised that this was covered under unscheduled personal property as the slots didn't qualify as "antiques" per se. Now, both the flood and the property and casualty insurer (with whom I have my homeowners policy) say that coin ops are subject to the collectible exclusion of \$2,500.00. There is presently a question under litigation as to whether or not the homeowners policy will apply in addition to the flood policy since the damage was the result of negligence in the construction and/or design of the retaining wall that toppled (it did not overflow) and therefore a covered event rather than coming under the flood exclusion of the homeowners policy. If this is successful, I'm going to make a claim on my coin ops as they are pieces of furniture as well as machines. Luckily, I had enough

other personal belongings that I will be able to max out on my flood coverage without utilizing the slots. This should be a word of great caution to all collectors. BUY AN ALL PERILS POLICY for your coin-ops. Also be sure that you have pictures of the coin-ops pre disaster.

COCA - The pictures are pretty impressive - How many machines did you have? Was anything salvageable?

PEPPI - I owned over sixty coin ops, including but not limited to Mills (an extensive collection from the Dewey, to the Goosenecks, to the Half Tops, F.O.K.s, and Q.T.s to High Tops), Watling (Judge, Penny Gooseneck Gum Vender and Castle Front, Coin Front and Cherry Front Rol-A-Tops) Jennings (Dutch Boy Display Front, Dixie Bell Console, Today Vender, etc.), a Bally Reliance, some Buckleys, a Paupa and Hochriem Columbia, an A.C. Multi Bell, a number of trade stimulators with token payouts, an electronic Bally slot and an electronic Black Jack machine, a number of pinball machines including a Bally Grandstand (one ball cash payout race horse theme) and a Bally Bikini (bingo machines), a Candy Store National Cash Register, and a Wurlitzer "One More Time" 45 R.P.M. Jukebox. Everything was damaged - Anything electronic went to the junkyard - Unfortunately all of these machines sat in saltwater for nearly 3 weeks. Perhaps if it was fresh water I may have had a chance to save some pieces. At this time the majority of my collection appears to be for salvage/parts. Everything that was not junked is in a warehouse. My home was damaged, and I'm presently in the process of restoring the same.

COCA - Did you have any other collections besides Coin Operated Machines.

PEPPI - I had an extensive collection of 45 R.P.M. records, concentrating mainly on New Orleans Rhythm and Blues and Rock and Roll. Some of these are harder to replace than the slot machines. I also had a huge collection of New Orleans Mardi Gras memorabilia. Additionally, I had a good collection of local beer cans, bottles, neon and other advertising. I even kept my stamp

collection, a hobby in which I have not been actively engaged for about forty years. I love to collect, and I'm starting over.

COCA - When did you start collecting?

PEPPI - I have always been a collector -- I collected stamps when I was a child through high school. Although gambling was technically illegal in Louisiana, New Orleans had a somewhat laissez faire attitude toward gambling until some time in the mid-fifties. Slots and pinball machines have always fascinated me. When I graduated from high school, my Dad asked me what I wanted and I told him a slot machine. I started collecting coin ops in earnest in 1980 when the law was changed to allow ownership of antique slot machines.

COCA - What were some of your favorites.

PEPPI - Some of my machines were rare, others had sentimental value. My absolute favorite was my first machine - A Mills Free Play Front Vender (these machines were used in New Orleans in the 1940s, and converted to cash payouts. Some years ago, I purchased a working set of electronics for this machine from St. Louis Slot Machine Co. and it was in perfect

working condition.) I really liked my Watling Musical Judge, and of course, the Mills Feature Bells such as the Horsehead Bonus and the Futurity. I also liked the QTs. I was especially proud of the Bally Reliance.

COCA - What are your plans for the future?

PEPPI - Rebuild and restore (if possible) and if necessary replace, and collect more machines. I now have lots of parts so I'll utilize as much as I can. I am looking into which machines can be rebuilt and restored.

Collecting coin ops has been a wonderful hobby for me for the last twenty five years, and is going to continue to be my hobby for as long as I'm still around. I've made many good friends in this hobby. I'm looking forward to seeing all of you (or as we say in New Orleans, y'all) for the Chicagoland Show and at the C.O.C.A. meeting in the Spring.



Before & After



Before & After

INTERVIEWER COMMENTS:

Considering what happened Peppi's spirits are good and he hasn't lost the collecting bug – sounds like it is just sidelined for a while.

He also made it very clear to me that it is not what we have, own or how big our collections are, it is friends, family and our spiritual lives that gets us through the tough times.

Thanks Peppi for sharing your story with C.O.C.A.



A CRICKET FOR LITTLE JIMMINY

by JOHN PETERSON

There are distinct personality differences between nationalities. Such has been the grist for comedians over the years and we've all enjoyed a laugh at the other countryman's expense. Most perceptions of difference are based on caricature but even so, there usually is a kernel of truth underlying the spoof. Having collected British games for a few years now and having had the opportunity to correspond with British collectors, great and small, I am struck by a difference in personality. Here in America, our stories are almost invariably about the huge "find" that we made, discovering a rare coin-op treasure in an unlikely place (like a garage sale) and purchasing it for a pittance. The British, on the other hand, are more likely to tell the opposite tale about the "one that got away." I like to think that is it more a testament to their national affinity for modesty rather than their bad luck that fuels such tales. As a matter of taste, I prefer the British approach, perhaps because it more accurately reflects the life that we all lead. I mean, how many of you actually married the Prom Queen? None the less, the story today is an American tale of stunning success but with a different moral than you might expect. Let us begin.

I am a small potatoes collector. My pockets are shallow rather than deep. And I am fine with that, really, I am. Recently here at an auction in Las Vegas, a single slot machine sold for over \$200,000. Add a 10% Buyer's premium plus tax and you have some serious money changing hands for one admittedly beautiful early American roulette game by Caille. I am not in that league. In fact, I am so far from that league that my mouth drops open when I see such spending. There are sales on Ebay where the opening price is so high that it makes me shake my head and think, "No way, Jose." Yet, when the item sells, there will often times be just one bid. If I recognize the bidder, it is almost always one of the major players among a small group of elite US collectors. I have a feeling that even if I won the lottery, I would not be bidding within that rarified air of world class collectors. It probably relates to my modest upbringing. My mother was a Depression era girl who suffered through the tough times. She imprinted her children with the need for thrift and the dangers of excess. So, what about us little guys? Does the modesty of our collector's budget relegate us to the dustbin

where the quality of our collection depends solely upon luck? If I'm speaking to your personal condition, please read on.

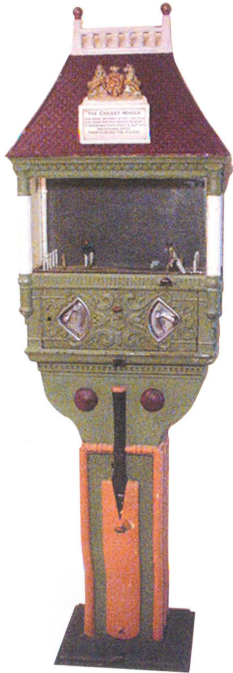
My passion for British games runs deep. As Dearly Beloved would agree, I devote a great deal of my free time to searching for or researching these machines. Once I get a new one home, it's off to my

little workshop in the basement where I dismantle the game completely and then reassemble it after hand polishing each piece, down to the individual screws. For me, there is something therapeutic about taking a sad looking relic from the past and giving it a second lease on life. It's also about continuity. I believe that I am charged with helping to preserve a small segment of our past for future generations. It's a way of saying, "This is who we were. Take a look and enjoy our pastimes for they will not be repeated." Coupled with my desire to preserve is my passion to know all about my latest acquisition. These games are a window into our past and I want to look through that window as far as I am able. In that respect, there are two main resources available: books and more knowledgeable friends. For beginning collectors, I would urge you to develop your library first and your collection afterward. Books are cheap when compared to machines and the knowledge you gain will help you level the playfield with the greatest of collectors. Such is the following tale of this little Jimminy.

The majority of my British game collection has come by way of the internet, either directly through auctions or indirectly from contact with other collectors. Without the internet, my present collection would have been impossible. I routinely troll through Ebay looking for English games up for auction. Less frequently, I visit the established coin-op web sites and take a look at the "For Sale" items. It's a matter of economy for me. I rarely see any English games offered for sale on American websites. I find this to be peculiar in a way for a great deal of English gaming was shipped to the States during the 1960's and 1970's. My speculation is that the American owners of these games, when they decide to sell their pieces, go to Ebay for the easy disposal as opposed to contacting a website that runs want ads. Ebay has the added advantage of automatic market pricing. Many owners of coin-op do not know the current value

of what they have. Some do not even know what it is they have. Ebay removes these barriers and auctions off the item at fair market value.

It was, then, with little expectation that I scrolled through the electronic classifieds in one site early last year. I had not been to this particular site in over six months and per usual, the vast majority of the ads were “wants” rather than “for sale.” As I scanned the page on autopilot, my eyes caught the critical word, “English.” The ad was a puzzler. It was offering for sale an



“antique cast iron English Cricket slot machine.” These three descriptive features: cast iron, Cricket and slot machine sounded like a mistake. It did not describe any game with which I was familiar and I look at every game I possibly can. Intrigued, I emailed the seller to see if he still had the machine, the price and if I could please see a picture of the game. I was fully expecting to see some common machine, incorrectly described when I received [Photo A](#). What I saw glowing on my screen was “The Cricket Match.” I knew I had seen the game before.

It was an easy process of finding the picture since there is only one decent book covering the broad field of English games, Nic Costa’s *Automatic Pleasures, The History Of The Coin Machine*. Sure enough, there on page 102 was a picture of my game by the Automatic Sports Company, London, 1903. I cross-referenced the game in Paul Braithwaite’s *Arcades And Slot Machines* to confirm the manufacturer and the date of production. My heart began to beat faster.

What about the asking price? It was not cheap by American standards but it was not outside my financial reach. The critical question: Was this price reasonable? My English friends are the greatest group. They have been very generous toward me with both their time and knowledge. It is to them that I turned for guidance. I emailed three advanced collectors with the picture and the simple question: “Is this a decent price to pay for this game?” All three were quick to respond with an affirmative answer but my favorite was a three word reply from one who succinctly commanded, “BUY IT NOW!” The consensus was that “Cricket” was seriously under-priced.

Additionally, it was a highly sought after game from

the early days of British coin-operated machine production. Automatic Sports Company was one of the earliest producers of large two-player machines. In addition to Cricket, they produced competitive games dealing with the sports of soccer, golf, horse racing, several types of shooting and the holy grail of British collecting, The Yacht Racer. Many of their games were like Cricket Match, made of heavy cast iron intended for outside placement in locales like piers and seaside arcades. Any game made by Ernest G. Matthewson, the founder of Automatic Sports Company is eminently collectable today. This particular game almost never comes up for sale in England. This one was sure to be snapped up by the first serious British collector who came across it on the web.

I called the seller. He was a very nice fellow in Texas, recently retired. He had owned the “Cricket” for the past 40 years, displaying and playing it in his living room. He and his wife had originally purchased it from a little antique store back in the 1960’s. Since retiring, they were looking to simplify their lives and selling “Cricket” was one of the first steps. As a matter of policy, I asked if there was any flexibility in the price. He said that there had been quite a bit of interest in the game including an English fellow who was currently exploring shipping alternatives. Therefore, the price was firm. At this point, I am about to fall out of my chair. Within my fingertips is one of the premier games from the earliest days of British coin-op and I’m up against some Brit who is looking for shipping? How do I close the deal and snag the game without starting a bidding war that I know I cannot win? If I appear too anxious, suspicions may be aroused and I will lose. If I wait one minute too long, the game is lost. Start biting your nails, please.

I called the seller back and agreed to his price. I then asked what form of payment he preferred. I offer a word of caution here. In these transactions that take place over distance, there is trust that must be established. In the usual case, the deal is struck and the purchaser sends payment to the seller before receiving the goods. This presents obvious opportunity for fraud. I am always mindful of this and try to get a strong feel for the person with whom I am dealing. In this instance, talking with the seller was like talking to your father. He would stop at times to ask his wife for help in answering questions and there was a distinct quality of authenticity in what he said and how he said it. Even so, there is a leap of faith with sending a cashier’s check to a total stranger. And leap I did.

The next morning I went to my bank, got a cashier's check and sent it via Overnight Express mail. Now, it was time to wait and hold my breath. Would he cash the check? Would he call the competition and start an auction? I resolved to sit quietly and wait for instruction from the seller. On Friday, I received an email from him stating that he had cashed the check but when he called my bank to see whether or not the funds had been debited, he was told he could not get the information without my permission. Could I please help? I breathed a sigh of relief. The deal was really being consummated!

I'm going to skip the part where I rant about the banking industry. The money was withdrawn from my account when I had the cashier's check drawn. The funds were actually transferred from my bank to his the next day when he deposited the check into his account. I was able to verify these facts with my bank. His bank then floated him for at least a week, telling him to call my bank to see if the check had cleared when his bank already had the funds in their hot little hands. After a call or two, I was able to get him the reassurance that the funds were transferred and the check was good.

The Cricket Match is a terrific game from years gone by. It is a two-player cricket match. After depositing a large British penny, depressing the right lever on the front of the game introduces a steel ball that rolls to rest in front of the "pitcher" figure on the right. Depressing the right lever from this point forward causes the pitcher to roll the ball toward the "batter" figure on the left side. The left lever controls the batting of that manikin. The ball is knocked between the two figures until it drains into either a "win" or "lose" hole. If it goes into a "win," the coin is automatically returned. When you consider that this game was first introduced around 1899, one can only say "WOW!"

The rest of the story is just shipping and delivery

of "The Cricket Match" to one very excited and happy collector. I have included a few more pictures for your entertainment (see below.) The moral of the tale is that you do not have to be a big time fancy-pants collector with money hanging out of your pockets to build a nice collection that may even include a signature piece or two. What you do have to have is a passion for collecting and a diligence in learning everything you can about these fabulous games. You also have an obligation to encourage and assist the other collectors who turn to you for guidance and expertise. Never forget that we were all neophytes when we began this fabulous journey into the world of coin-operated marvels. If you do these things, the rewards that return to you will be bountiful. I tell you this truly, as one Jimminy Cricket to another.

POSTSCRIPT: *Got the British game bug? Want to talk about it? You can write me at jp4@charter.net or call 952 891-2312. Next time we'll take a look at a French girly game with a decidedly American twist and I'm not talking Chubby Checker.*



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I LOOK FOR INTERESTING, DIFFERENT & UNUSUAL - FROM ANY YEAR!**

WHO WANTS A BERGER?

by ROGER P. SMITH

The History of the Paul E. Berger Manufacturing Company

You might get a very different answer to the question “Who wants a Berger?” if you ask a slot machine collector or a vending enthusiast. Advanced slot collectors may know the Paul E. Berger Manufacturing Company of Chicago Ridge as one of the most successful, but short lived of the early makers of upright electric slot machines. Vending enthusiasts may know little or nothing about this company except for a single vendor in Ken Rubin’s book or Bill Enes’ books. The real story of Paul E. Berger and his company is more complex and is one of wild success and catastrophic failure, all in a very short period of time.

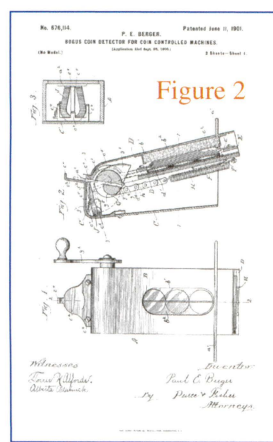
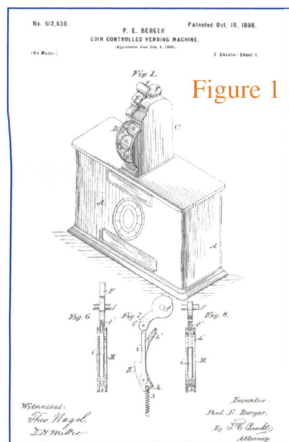
In one of his books, the late Richard Bueschel attributes the first Berger slot machines to 1896, but corporate records show that the Paul E. Berger Manufacturing Company of Chicago received its corporate charter March 28, 1898. The charter lists the company as a manufacturer of ‘novelties’ but its main products in the early years were upright (floor) electric slot machines and cash registers. The small city of Chicago Ridge was chosen as the location for the company’s manufacturing plant. Located 15 miles southwest of the Chicago Loop, Chicago Ridge and its neighbor, Worth, both grew up along a feeder canal for the Illinois & Michigan Canal that reached from the Little Calumet River westward through the Saganash-kee Slough. The area was first settled in the 1840s and 50s by German and Dutch farmers, but the area languished economically until the coming of the Wabash, St. Louis & Pacific Railroad in 1882. Later, the Wabash would be crossed in the middle of Chicago Ridge by the Chicago & Calumet Terminal Railway, which also established rail yards in the village. In 1898, the Berger Company located its plant on 5 acres at Birmingham & Oxford, adjacent to the railroad intersection using some of the existing buildings of the Navy Cash Register Company. The Navy Cash Register Company was also known as the Chicago Cash Register Company and was eventually acquired by National Cash Register Company in 1905. The Berger Company built housing for its employees, and a settlement with a tavern, rooming house,

and grocery store emerged around the factory. The first post office for Chicago Ridge opened in 1900 in the Berger factory (James H. Robison was named the first Postmaster, April 2, 1900) and, in 1902, the Wabash Railroad established a train station. Some longtime residents of Chicago Ridge even credit Paul Berger as “the man that built the town.”

James Jacob Ritty of Dayton, Ohio, is credited with inventing the cash register (“Ritty’s Incorruptible Cashier”) in 1879. While the field of cash registers continued to be one of innovation and change for many years, Paul Berger concentrated on other areas. It appears that Berger had his fingers in many pies, but **most of his** inventing and manufacturing efforts were spent on slot machines. The first payout slot machines appeared in 1892, making slot machines the hot item of the day with a number of manufacturers bringing out new models as fast as an eager market demanded. Times were good; the stock market crash of a few years prior (1893) had passed, the Alaska Gold Rush of 1898 was prompting over 50,000 men to brave the element for a chance to get rich quick and discretionary money that could be risked on a game of chance was available. These new gambling devices offered novelty and a chance to win a tidy sum. Berger joined several other manufacturers (Mills, Caille, Paupa and Hochriem, Daniel H. Schaal, Watling, White and the Automatic Machine Company) and brought out dry-cell operated electrical slot machines, rising to be the primary producer of this type of machine.

The Paul E. Berger Manufacturing Company brought out upright (floor) model slot machines called the Chicago Ridge (1898-1905), the Magic Fortune Teller (1899), and what was probably their most popular machine, the Uno (1900-1902). They also made machines that were named for other cities and states; The Missouri, the Oshkosh, The Kalamazoo, and The Monadnock, of which only a total of about 30 are known to have survived. The period was one of rampant corporate copying of any successful idea, name, or product. Like other manufacturers, Berger brought out his own

versions of the popular Owl, Fox, Lion, Star, and Judge (1900-1902, of which only one example made by Berger is known). Paul Berger brought out his American Beauty slot in 1901 and an unusually named Oom-Paul (1901-1903) that has the distinction of being one of the tallest floor model slot machines ever produced. The Oom-Paul was named for Paul Kruger (1825-1904), one of the fathers of the South African Republic and swashbuckling figure of the Boer Wars. Oom-Paul is derived from the Dutch word for Uncle but in popular parlance of the day it had become slang for “daring-do.” It is said that Paul Berger named the machine for this daring-do combined with his own first name. The Berger company also brought out their own version of the very popular ‘Dewey’ upright slot (1901-1904), but as Bueschel put it, it was the “worst looking Dewey of them all.” The Berger Company was sufficiently successful that the Sapho Manufacturing Company, also from Chicago, licensed it to produce the Sapho floor peep show. (Sapho also licensed this machine to Mills, RJ White, and others at about the same time.)



Paul Berger was himself an inventor. In 1898, he obtained a patent for a coin acceptor (No. 612656, October 18, 1899, Figure 1) and in 1901, was granted a patent (No. 676,114, June 11, 1901, Figure 2) for a slug ejector / coin head for slot machines that eventually found use on some of his later models. While it appears that this later coin head was an improvement over what was available, it was inexplicably not added to Berger’s machines until several years later when a competing coin head system that did not require the user to turn a crank had already made its appearance on other machines. We don’t know if this failure to take advantage of a new technology was because of financial problems the company was experiencing, or if this failure to respond to rapidly changing issues in the marketplace resulted in the company’s hard times. Berger also patented a match or gum vender (No. 822,909, June 12, 1906) that

appears to be the later National Vender, made in 1907, that is often found selling Colgan’s Taffy Tolu gum or Wilbur’s Chocolates. The connection between this patent and the subsequent manufacture of the machine by another company remains unknown, but suggests a need to sell or license the patent to raise cash.

With so many products in a popular field, what happened to spell the doom of the Berger Company? Electrically operated slot machines of this era used power from a dry-cell battery to detect a winning combination and effect a payout. While this sounds like prescient technology – one that would not make its reappearance for many decades – it was sadly before its time. The contacts of these machines became dirty and unreliable, batteries had to be replaced often, and the player would only receive their winnings if they remembered to hold down the activating lever while the machine completed its cycle. These were all major drawbacks that had to be put up with, but when fully mechanical slots made their appearance, the electric slot machines faded as fast as they had risen to popularity.

Another key to the demise of this company may have been the success of the young Mills Novelty Company. In 1897, Herbert S. Mills bought out his father’s M.B.M. Cigar Vending Machine Company and began selling slot machines, using the relatively new medium of printed catalogs. What worked for Sears, Roebuck and Co., worked for Mills and the combination of widespread advertising and a mechanically superior product put pressure on most of the competing producers of early slot machines. By 1902, the production of electric slot machines effectively ended because of this pressure. To further this leadership, in 1907, Charles Fey teamed up with the Mills Novelty Company to manufacture the Mills Liberty Bell. The Liberty Bell featured a cast iron case, with a Liberty Bell cast into the front of the machine. The machine originally had cast iron feet with toes, but in later models the toes were eliminated and replaced with simpler ornate scrolled feet. The machine’s reel strips depicted playing cards (the king, queen, and jack) and it had a bell that rang with a winning combination. The ringing bell was quickly dropped, but the original concept was not lost – modern slot machines use a bell that signals a jackpot. In 1910, the Mills Novelty Company introduced a slight variation to the Liberty Bell and called it the Operator Bell because it was more available to the operators than competing machines. This machine had a gooseneck coin entry and featured the now famous fruit symbols, which are still used today. It is estimated

that over 30,000 of these cast iron machines were made, though few are found today.

We can follow the fate of the Paul E. Berger Company in papers filed with the State of Illinois as part of their yearly corporate reporting requirements and through other documents: On the 28th day of February 1898, Paul E. Berger, Theodore Nagel, and James A. Davis put their hands to the documents forming the Paul E. Berger Manufacturing Company and paid the \$25 filing fee (the equivalent of \$553.89 in 2005 dollars). They proposed the object of the new company to be the “buying, manufacturing, operating, marketing, and handling on commission wood and metal working machinery; steam, hydraulic, wind, compressed air, horse, foot and electric power machinery; farmers, dairymen, mechanics and artisans machinery, tools and supplies; also owning and operating gold, silver, nickel and tin plating plants; smelting plants and iron, brass and other metal foundries.” They proposed to capitalize the new company with the issue of \$2500 in corporate bonds, valued at \$50 each, \$2400 of which were to be held by Paul E. Berger with the remaining \$100 to be held by Charlotte Berger (his wife?). The stockholders and organizers met on March 24th and elected the new Board of Directors: Paul E. Berger, Charlotte Berger and Otto Berger. Having met all the requirements of the State of Illinois, the Paul E. Berger Manufacturing Company officially was chartered March 28th, 1898.

The new company must have been reasonably prosperous in their first year. On October 30th the following year (1899), the stockholders of the company voted to increase the capital stock of the company to \$50,000 (over \$1.1 million in today’s dollars). Based on their building and economic effect on the little city of Chicago Ridge, the early years were boom years, but by 1901 there were definite signs of impending financial doom. Machines made by the company in the years of 1900 and 1901 show cutbacks in ornamentation, using a sparser look and cheaper manufacturing methods. An advertisement that ran weekly in The National Police Gazette from May 4, 1901 to June 8, 1901 promised, “Guaranteed new and perfect slot machines. Owl, Judge, Uno, Fox, Star, Lion, \$40 each, Paul E. Berger Mfg Co Chicago.” This was a very low price for machines of the time and reflects the cheaper manufacture and (possibly) desperation by the company.

Either because of economic pressure or as a potential cause of it, the Berger company was offering a dizzying array of services: An early entry in the Chicago Business Directory advertised them to be manufactur-

ers of “High-Grade Bicycles, Expert Model and Pattern Makers, Inventions perfected and specialties manufactured, Tin and sheet metal work, Nickel plating in all its branches.” A July 20, 1901 advertisement in the Police Gazette read: “For Sale. Peanut venders absolutely perfect, can’t be manipulated. Our machines are their own salesmen. Place a sample order, it will do the rest. Prompt shipments. We also control all the Spanish Salted Peanuts in the world, roasted by our own special process. Positively the most perfect and artistic in design Card Machines, 5-slot combination, \$7.50 each. Phonograph Horns, Garden Benches, Slot Machines, all kinds. Address Paul E. Berger, Co., 395 Dearborn St. Chicago, Ill. Factory: Chicago Ridge, Ill. A visit to our factory means money and valuable information for you.” What an ad, everything from claiming a worldwide monopoly on peanuts to selling garden benches and phonograph horns! An existing copy of Paul E. Berger, Co. letterhead from just after the turn of the century shows a world globe surmounted by a wheel and electric sparks and the words “Worlds largest manufacturer of slot and vending machines.” It goes on to tout lots of other manufacturing activities including tin plating and enameling and “Mechanical work to order in any metal, copper, aluminum, bronze, machining, spinning, finishing.” In a era notable for hyperbole, Paul E. Berger certainly held his own.

By 1901, the Ripley J. White Manufacturing Company, also of Chicago Ridge, had entered into some sort of agreement with the Berger Company to produce some or all of their slot machines with the White Company producing their own versions of the American Beauty (regular and musical versions), the Chicago Ridge and the Oom-Paul. (Ripley J. White actually lived almost next door to the Berger plant.) There is some evidence to support White’s production of the Berger Dewey (1901-1904). With the collapse of the electric slot machine market in 1901 and 1902, the Berger Company must have been in serious trouble because they failed to file the required annual report with the state and their charter was temporarily revoked in July of 1902. The RJ White company loaned Berger \$8,000 to help bail out the company, but court records from 1905 indicate that this may have been a form of buyout. (Berger sued RJ White March 29, 1905, to try to regain control of the company, then valued at \$120,000 and further alleged that White sold off finished inventory worth \$40,000 and machinery originally costing \$20,000, while pocketing the profits for himself.) By 1903, the Berger Company was officially reinstated in business by the State of Illi-

nois, but they list their business as the “buying, operating, marketing and handling wood and metal working machinery.” Their mailing address had become “General Delivery” in Chicago and their officers consisted of Paul E. Berger, President and Treasurer, and Herman Berger, Secretary. Paul’s address was still listed as being in Chicago Ridge, but the secretary’s address was 331 N. 60th Place, a residential area near today’s University of Chicago campus, suggesting fragmentation of the company. By the 1904 annual filing, the name Otto Berger, Vice President was added to the list of officers, but his name does not appear on subsequent filings. The company’s mailing address had also been changed to 196 S. Clark Street in the heart of downtown Chicago.

The year 1905 brought more signs of a failing company. The corporate office had moved again to 415 Dearborn Street and while Herman Berger was still listed as Secretary, Paul Berger signed the annual report as President and Secretary, in addition to his listing as Treasurer. 1906 brought yet another move, this time to 48 River Street, Chicago, where they would stay until they went out of business. It is interesting that in the 1906 filing, Paul Berger listed the same address as both his residence and business address, although the following years, until the company closed, he listed 541 Wells Street as home. In the 1907 filing, no other officers are listed, only Paul E. Berger as President. In the 1908 filing one “H. Hermenberger” is listed as the company Secretary with Paul Berger retaining the roles of President and Treasurer. (In the handwritten papers available, this is a clearly different name that the “Herman Berger” listed in this position from 1903 to 1906, but a simple transcription error by the person filing the papers cannot be ruled out.) On February 24, 1909, Paul E. Berger put his signature on the official papers dissolving the company for the final time and the Secretary of State (for Illinois) made it official March 16th, 1910. In 1926, the Clerk of the Superior Court of Cook County sent the Secretary of State notice that a court action decreeing the Paul E. Berger Manufacturing Company dissolved had been entered April 10th of that year. (The reason for the 15-plus year delay between these last two dates is unknown, but it may represent the time necessary for the company to go through receivership.) The Chicago Ridge factory of the Paul E. Berger Company, once the “world leader,” was demolished in 1927.

What about the vending side of this story? In 1901, Paul E. Berger filed a patent application for a “coin-

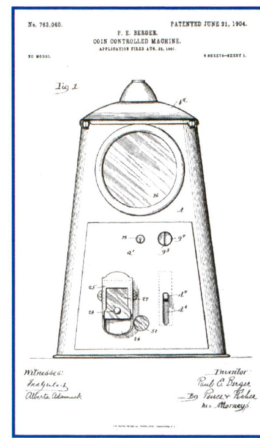


Figure 3

Paul Berger proposed a machine for vending variable amounts of “granular material – such as peanuts, popcorn, and the like,” as he put it in his patent application. The object of his invention was “to provide an efficient apparatus for vending goods...and, further, to provide a construction which may be conveniently operated by a proper coin or check, but in which the fraudulent manipulation of the device by means of bogus coins or by the repeated operation through the medium of a single coin is prevented.” Berger even added features that



Figure 4

would prevent the use of ferrous slugs, pasteboard disks, and strings or wires to be used to trip the machine or recover the used coin.

While the extant machines are more ornate than what is shown in the patent drawings (Figure 4), it is clear that the few that exist do follow the basic design set out in the patent. The machine is made of heavy cast iron with filigree decorations, an ornate topknot and figural feet. The product is delivered down a chute covered by a heavy, vertically sliding door (Figure 5) and even the top lock has a hinged cover (Figure 6).



Figure 5

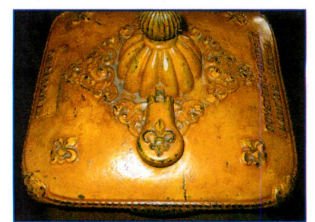


Figure 6

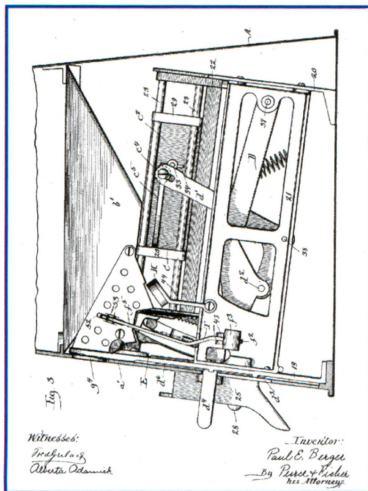


Figure 7

product down the delivery shoot. As designed, the coin mechanism included hardware that would deliver the most recently used coin into a witness window next to the delivery shoot (Figure 3, #51) as a way of discouraging the use of slugs. Existing examples of this machine lack both the witness window and the

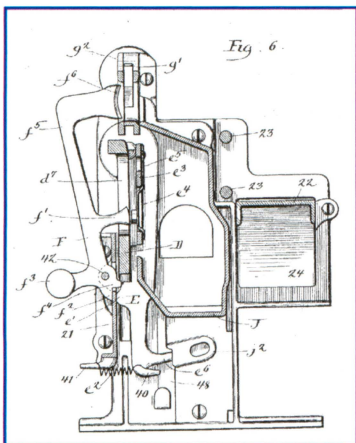


Figure 9

that are out there, but it is clearly a very small handful – probably five or less. We don't know if the rarity of this machine is due to a high attrition rate, a low number produced or if they were only made as prototypes (even though the machine is shown on the company's letter head). It must have been labor and cost intensive to make all the castings and to machine and assemble all the parts. Based on the detail of the examples available, it seems unlikely that there were only prototypes – why make more than one and why make them all the same? Could they have been made as salesmen's samples? They are far too heavy to be easily carried

The vending mechanism of this interesting machine is in a word, robust (Figure 7). The delivery system (Figure 8) consists of a rectangular adjustable chamber that sits below the hopper-shaped reservoir that both holds and displays the product to be vended. A level arm moves this chamber forward to drop the

associated mechanism. The same mechanism that would hold the used coin in the witness window also was used to cut any string or light wire that might have been attached to the coin so it could be pulled back out of the machine after the product had been vended (Figure 9, #f5).

No accurate count or estimate exists on the number of Berger venders

on sales calls. If they were production machines, why have so few survived? They were clearly mechanically robust and aesthetically attractive machines; attributes that, in other machines, have insured survival in reasonable numbers. If we are to believe the Berger's advertising hype and they did indeed control the entire Spanish peanut supplies, they would have been in a good position to capitalize and produce lots of machines. It would seem reasonable to speculate that by the time the

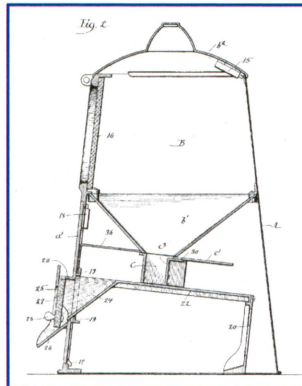


Figure 8

few machines that exist rarely change hands and command top dollar when they do. What many collectors do not realize is that there is a tie to a pair of popular and relatively more common cast iron venders: Smiling Sam and Happy Jap.

The tie between these seemingly unrelated machines is the RJ White Manufacturing Company. Remember that it was the RJ White Manufacturing Company that took over the production of a number of Berger's upright slot machines and helped to bail out the company. It was also the White Company that made the Happy Jap and later Smiling Sam machines. Like the Berger vender, the Smiling Sam and Happy Jap machines are heavy machines that are very large and overly designed for a surprisingly small capacity. It is ironic that the RJ White Manufacturing Company, that helped bail out Paul Berger, itself got into financial trouble about the same time (1907) and emerged as the White Vending Company. That company name is associated with machines like the Buffalo.

So who wants a Berger? Advanced collectors of both slot machines and venders are likely to say, "I do" to that question — now you know why.

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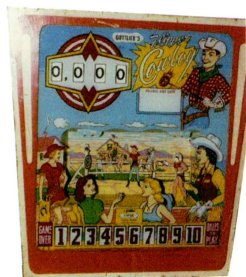
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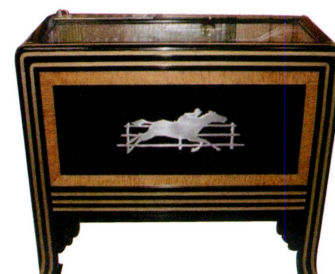
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(Thanks Claude)



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Circa 1900 Cast Iron German Floor
Model Chocolate Venders
Original Condition
(Thanks Heinrich)



1937 "Le Jockey" 3 Selection
Token Pay-Out
French Horse Race Machine
Art Deco Style and Original
(Like a Floor Model Official Sweepstakes)
(Thanks Claude)

Serious Early Buyers Bring Flash Lights to Chicagoland Coin-Op Show

by JACK KELLY

The doors didn't open until 7:00 am for early buyers at the semi-annual Chicagoland Antique Advertising, Slot Machine and Jukebox show Friday, Nov. 11., at Pheasant Run Resort, St. Charles, Ill. But, hundreds of early buyers filled the parking lot in the pre-dawn hours, armed with flash lights looking for choice buys.

"This is like the old days" said one vendor calling attention to a "crowd that was hungry for bargains" adding, "I got here at 4:30 and I think that must have been late, because it was jumping with activity."

Many of those early buyers paid a \$50 admission fee to shop the show, while more casual shoppers waited until Saturday or Sunday for a more modest \$6.00 entry.

A sold-out crowd of over 300 dealers offered up a wide variety of antiques and collectibles for buyers from as far away as California and several foreign countries.

In a time when many are calling on-line shopping and dealing the best way to buy and sell, dealer Dennis Wilson of Beach Grove, Ind., doesn't agree. "This show is 25% social and 75% business" said Wilson who added, "on-line transactions are just not the same, I like to meet people face to face to buy and sell." He offered a fully restored 1933 Mills Roman Head Slot Machine for \$2,650 and a totally refurbished 1914 Jennings Operator Bell slot with side vendor for \$2,850.

"It's all original from A to Z" said John Papa pointing to 7-foot tall fortune telling machine, complete with full size figure of a glassed-in woman inside making several movements before handing out a fortune card. The 1920's nickel operated machine, known as the "Cleveland Grandmother" was priced at \$44,000. The dealer, from Mayfield, N.Y., said a mint original, walnut cabinet 1937 Rockola World Series baseball machine sold early in the show, also priced at \$44,000.

Still other serious buyers checked out a floor mod-

el 1902 Mills Dewey slot machine with "Albert Pick special quarter sawn oak case" offered for \$21,000 by Frank Zygmunt, Westmont, Ill. The dealer also displayed over 100 other slot machines priced from \$900 and up.

25 year show veteran Dale Emery traveled 1,000 miles from Little Elm, Tx., to show a variety of choice coin operated machines. The dealer said he "started as a buyer" and said he has seen ups and downs over the years adding, "this time has been good." Many stopped to admire his 1920s Simpson 1-2-3 gumball machine with original marquee that gave the customer "6 balls for 3-cents." Fully restored, it could be taken home for \$625. At the same spot, a 1920s Columbus "A" peanut machine could vend goodies at your place for \$450.

Vintage coin operated scales filled the booth of Bill and Jan Berning of nearby Genoa, Ill. "It's a full 6 foot tall" said the dealer, pointing to a porcelain 1920s Peerless Aristocrat "lollipop" scale, that has earned the nickname because of a large round porcelain head. It could tell the correct weight at home for \$900. At the same spot, a 4-foot-tall porcelain Watling Tom Thumb Jr., complete with parcel hook was offered at \$700. The dealer said he stocks over 700 vintage scales at his business location, an 11,000 square foot old opera house.

"It's one of a kind" said dealer Alex Warschaw of Scottsdale, Az. The dealer pointed to a 25-inch tall nickel operated wood case trade stimulator with a large wheel inside that allowed the customer to win one or more cigars. The circa 1893 oak device carried a price tag of \$7,500.

Shoppers did a double-take at the booth of Lloyd Thoburn, Hagerstown, Maryland, where a life size fiberglass Spiderman figure appeared to be crawling across the top of three juke boxes. They included a 1973 Wurlitzer 1050, \$5,000; a 1959 AMI-J-200, \$1,200 and a 1959 Wurlitzer 2304, \$1,350. The Spiderman figure, rescued from a restaurant, was priced at \$500.

Finely restored gumball and peanut machines --and one oddball item -- filled the booth of Randy Razzoog of Grand Rapids, Mich. The offbeat item was a 4-inch long salesman sample bicycle seat perched on a stand. The tiny sample, advertising Continentale bike seats could be taken home for \$695.

The twice per year show is run by Kevin and Dawn Greco partnering with Bob and Penny Traynoff. The November show was the third since the two couples purchased it, prompting Penny to say, "we're getting the hang of it, with a sold-out crowd of 316 dealers inside and a full compliment in the parking lot." Kevin

Greco said, “we kept an eye on fluctuating gas prices in the months before the show, wondering if it would hurt attendance, but were very happy with the turnout.”

As usual, reports from the selling floor were mixed, with some dealers reporting “fantastic sales” while others said “it was soft.”

Perhaps Greco summed it up best when he said, “we can only provide the crowd, it’s all in what the people want.”

The next Chicagoland Show will be held March 31, April 1 and 2, next year at Pheasant Run Resort, St. Charles, Ill. For more information visit www.chicagolandshow.com, or by telephone at 1-847-244-9263.

A 1905 National cash register was offered for \$2,950 and a 1930s all original 4-in-one vendor for \$1,100 by Charles Kemp of Ashboro, North Carolina.



Mark Bennett of Roscoe, Pa., offered a 1903 Mills Jockey with card game reels for \$5,200.



This 1914 Jennings Operator Bell slot machine featured a side-vendor and price tag of \$2,850.



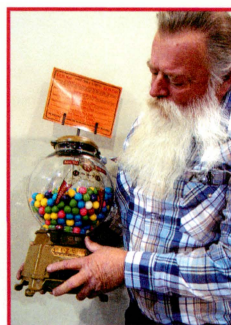
Serious collectors checked out the all original 7 foot-tall nickel operated 1920s “Cleveland Grandmother” fortune telling machine priced at \$44,000.



A 1902 Mills Dewey slot machine with quarter sawn oak case could grace your home or office for \$21,000.



With original marquee, this Simpson 1-2-3 gumball machine was offered for \$625.



Steve McCormick of Castro Valley, Ca., looks over an early Columbus E-Z coin-op machine with original locks and paint priced at \$1,750.



Dealer Randy Razzoog of Grand Rapids, Mich., showed off a 4-inch-long salesman sample bike seat for \$695.



Both dealer Bill Berning, and the porcelain 1920s lollipop scale, stood nearly 6 foot-tall at the Chicagoland show.

DOES THE NAME RO-BO VENDER RING A BELL!

by the late Ken Rounds

Actually the correct name for this vendor is "The Mechanical Salesman" (*Silent Salesman Too* by Bill Enes, page 134.) This 1929 machine is quite rare and rarely seen. My estimate is, there are but 4 or 5 working survivors. It is either a wall or flat sitting (counter model) machine. The mechanism is rather complicated and depends, as, I understand it, largely on an oil filled cylinder. The thickness of the oil determines the speed or lack of, that promotes the action.

Here is a rundown on the A to Z function. The confections are stored in the top behind the wire mesh glass window. When a penny is deposited and the lever pulled down, the puppet turns inward, basket in hand. His left arm pushes open the inside vending trough allowing a pre-measured amount of the confection to drop into his metal basket. When the lever is pushed back up, the puppet turns, facing the front and his right basket hand dumps the contents down the outside chute for receipt by the customer. The entire process takes about 3 seconds and is quite fascinating to watch.

The accompanying photos are of the same machine. The machine is complete with the decal and brass facing plate and is in superb working condition. This is a well built vendor. Why have they all but disappeared? Possible too mechanically complicated to reasonably maintain. Details anyone??

Inside View



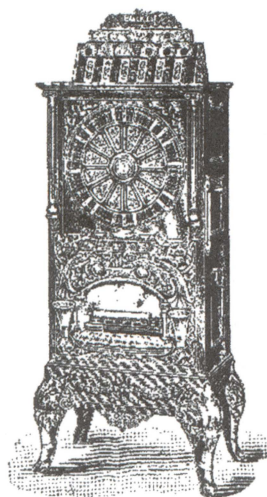
Front View



Side View



Robo Guy

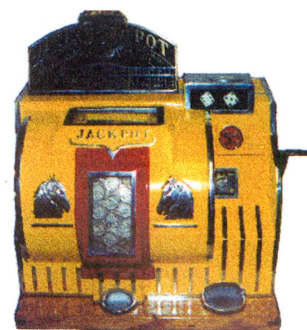


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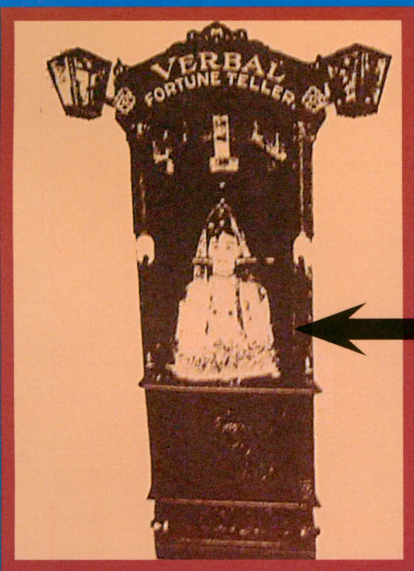
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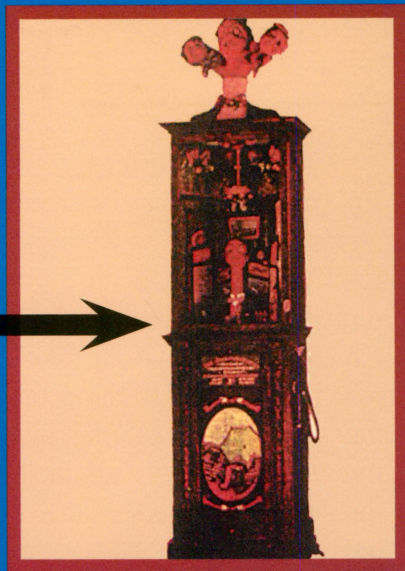
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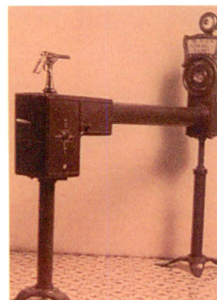
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Tales of the Hunt

Hosted by JACK FREUND

This "Tale" comes out of North Carolina, submitted by C.O.C.A. member Keith Morris. He describes his Tale as a "Quest for the Rock-Ola 1937 World Series." (I'd call it "Scoring the Hard Way") Here is Keith's story.....

When I was thirteen years old I played an old baseball game at an arcade in New Hampshire. Back then I had been a young pinball addict for some time but I hadn't seen anything like this machine. The ball came out of the umpire's chest, the pitcher threw it, and, best of all, the balls themselves recorded the hits, outs, strikes, and balls. Plus, it was OLD-even back then! Being an aspiring engineer, I thought it was pretty cool that the machine did so much and was all mechanical, save for the one motor you could hear humming away inside. Cool enough, in fact, that I went home and built one. It took quite a while and the design morphed a few times, but it actually worked and replicated the original pretty well. I had to guess at the internal design but I actually got it pretty close to the real thing. That game I played when I was thirteen was the Rock-Ola 1937 World Series.

Fast forward a few decades and my coin-op interest was reborn. With a little more time, space and money (all three are needed for this hobby, I have learned) I jumped back into it and my interests expanded to more than just pinball. One of the first things I did was look for that old baseball game. I did a little research and found out what the machine was, and, to my dismay, how rare (read expensive) it was. I had little hope of ever owning one and thought I would have to be content with my home-built version - which I still had!

As my coin-op interest grew, I joined C.O.C.A., combed the Internet and eBay religiously, and started going to a few shows. My collection of early pinballs, arcade machines, slots and trade stimulators grew. Along the way I did see a couple of 1937 World Series for sale but decided to pass on them, later kicking myself, of course. I even went back to that old arcade in New Hampshire, and the original family that owned it was still there. But the machine had been sold off years ago. "It became too valuable to let it sit out on the arcade floor," they said. That was a few years ago. Last fall I attended the Chicago show and, upon recommendation of a friend, made an effort to go to Jasper Sanfillipo's house for the C.O.C.A. meeting. To say the least I was awestruck, and I particularly noticed the All-American

Baseball, manufactured by the Amusement Machine Corporation around 1930, which happened to be the predecessor of Rock-Ola's 1937 World Series. I returned from the show with a renewed interest in seriously looking for the 1937 World Series, I joined a couple of on-line forums that had just started up, and got a welcome message from one member with whom

I had corresponded before, and I

recalled that he had worked on a World Series sometimes in the past. Off the cuff, I asked him if he had heard of any for sale and if he did in the future, would he let me know. Much to my surprise, his response was that he had just talked to a lady in Canada about one a couple of weeks before and he was going to pass on the machine! Talk about luck! To make a long story short, I contacted the couple selling the machine, got some pictures, and made a deal over the phone. And no, I did not get to haul away the "old piece of junk" for \$25!! They knew what they had and there were other parties interested in it. We settled on a price I thought was fair, but definitely not a steal. All of that was easy-the hard part would be how to conduct the transaction and get the machine safely back home.

The machine was located in the basement of a house on a small tourist island off the coast of Vancouver, British Columbia. The game had been owned by the couple's parents and used in a "dine and dance" in the 1940's. When the place closed the machine went into the basement and remained there for decades. It was played by the kids, but they had since grown and moved out. The owners had put the machine on the market several years back but they decided not to sell it at that time. It was a family heirloom and they also realized it would be a good investment to hang onto it. But eventually they had a renewed interest in getting it sold as they were preparing to move.

Since I didn't know anyone in the area and this was going to be the kind of transaction where you don't just mail out a check on good faith, I quickly concluded I would have to make the journey myself to verify the condition, pay the seller, and take possession of the machine. It turned out that would be quite a challenge.

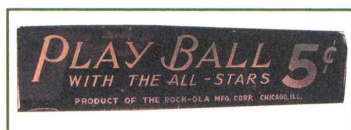
Christmas was in a couple of weeks and I had to work around that. I didn't want to wait too long, as the sellers refused to accept a deposit, and although we had a verbal agreement and the price was fair enough, I was afraid they might be tempted by someone who came along with a better offer. I quickly made arrangements with a local shipper in Canada, a customs broker, and planned the trip. I ended up making a marathon journey across country, flying through two connections, renting a car and finally taking a ferry on the last leg of the journey. More than once I wondered if this would all be worth it, thinking that perhaps this was some kind of scam, or that the machine was somehow something less than what it appeared. The next morning I went to visit the couple and inspect the machine. It was just as it was in the pictures - a little dirty and worn, some veneer damage, but al-in-all it was in pretty good shape and complete. It also had an original glass marquee that was different from all those I had seen. The sellers were very gracious and wonderful hosts. We chatted about the World Series and I showed them some literature that I had about the game. They gave me lots of local smoked salmon to bring back. I paid the sellers and we commenced loading the machine on their truck, which they had kindly offered, for the journey to the shipper in Victoria. The seller called his son to come help load it, and he came, but he was definitely not at all happy at seeing the family heirloom going out the door, and he didn't hide his displeasure! We took off to the ferry landing and had planned on taking an early afternoon ferry but it just so happened that the large ferry was out-of-service that day and a smaller one was in its place. We did not make it on to the planned ferry

and had to wait two hours in line for the next one. We finally made it on and set out. I remember thinking how out-of-place it seemed to have this valuable antique on the back of a pickup truck, covered by a blue tarp on a ferry going across the Straits of Georgia in western British Columbia. We got to the mainland and drove to the shipper, getting there around 4:30pm on a Friday afternoon. That was too close for comfort - if we hadn't made it before the shipper closed, we would have to return the machine to the island and I'd have to stay until Monday. I left the next day - another marathon trip, complete with airplane delays and arrived home at 3:00am. The machine got crated up and shipped off. It sailed through customs and was at my door in a couple of weeks.

So now my "lifelong" hunt for the 1937 World Series has come to a successful conclusion. The machine is cleaned up but I have not done any restoration as of this writing. I am reminded of the machine's significance by the reactions of people who see it, beginning with the shipper in Canada. An old-timer who looked like he could have played this game in his youth, was taken aback when we uncovered the machine. "Wow, that's an old beauty, where did you find that?" The seller quickly replied "in a basement!" I wonder how many more good finds are still sitting in basements out there, yet to be discovered. Let's hope there are many!

See pictures of the machine and its journey at www.coinopamericana.com/quest.

About the author: Keith Morris is a coin-op collector and restorer living in Fuquay-Varina, NC.

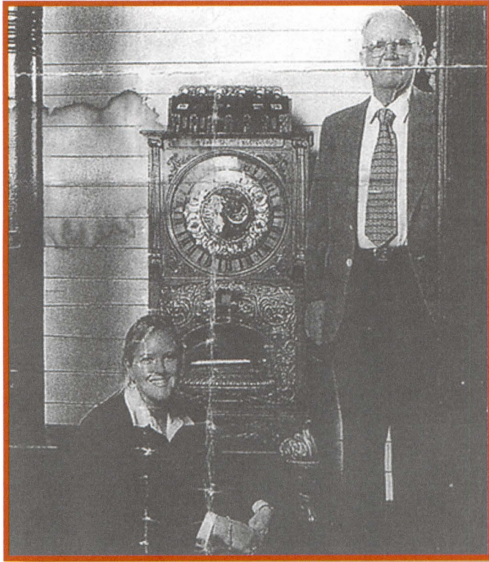


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BEFORE CASINOS, THERE WAS CAILLE

Slot-Machine Maker was Big Wheel in Detroit

Submitted by Marshall Fey



THE REALM OF THE COIN:

Susan Stone, director at Bank One Capital Markets Inc., who helps her grandfather Arthur Caille research family history, visited one of the famed Caille slot machines in the Streets of Old Detroit exhibit at the Detroit Historical Museum.

MGM Grand Detroit Casino's auspicious opening last month, ballyhooed as the city's entry into casino gambling, wasn't the first time Detroit has made money legally from slot machines.

Starting in the 1890's, Detroit was home to one of the top slot machine manufacturers in the world, Caille Bros. Co.

The sprawling Caille Detroit factory at 6210 Second Ave. employed hundreds of people and manufactured thousands of slot machines that were sold around the world.

Art Caille, 81 of Dearborn recalled that his grandfather, Adolph Caille, was always tinkering with equipment, even at his mansion home on Virginia Park Street.

"My grandfather was a cabinetmaker, and his brother, Arthur, was a technician," Caille said. They started out making cash registers and other machinery to count and move money.

The Caille lines grew to encompass arcade games, weight and strength scales, gum machines and, especially, slot machines. They also produced a popular line of outboard motors. Caille even built coin-operated "moving picture" machines, sometimes called nickel-odeons.

This led Arthur into the motion-picture business. In 1907, he backed John Kunsy, a Caille plant employee, in opening Detroit's first movie theater, called the Casino, at 28 Monroe St. downtown.

When Arthur Caille died in 1919, brother Adolph continued to run their businesses until he sold out in 1937.

The Caille brothers were born in Detroit and started a machinery business in Saginaw in 1890. A few years later, they returned to Detroit and took over the former Vanderbilt Match Co. factory on Second Avenue near Amsterdam Street, just south of where General Motors Corp. would build its world headquarters on West Grand Boulevard.

"Their slot machines were known as the Cadillac of the slot machines, with beautiful wood and nickel finishes," Caille said. "Now they're really valuable collector items, selling for \$75,000 and \$80,000 and more, when they're available.

By various accounts, Caille was one of the three largest slot machine manufacturers in a cutthroat business. Other top companies were Fey Bros. of San Francisco, Mills in New York City and Watling of Chicago. None of the manufacturers was above stealing designs for popular slot machines, according to *Slot Machines, a Pictorial History of the First Hundred Years*, by Marshall Fey.

Like most of the country, Detroit had no gambling casinos. But Caille slot machines were used at amusement parks, saloons and stores.

As pressure mounted to crack down on coin-operated gambling machines in various states and nationwide, the Caille brothers enlarged their plant in 1928

to 240,000 square feet to increase production of their "Red Head" outboard motors. "They manufactured motors for Sears to put their name on, and some were even sold through J.L. Hudson's," Caille said.

But slot machines continued to make up a large part of their production. Banned in most states starting in 1909, the popular machines were big moneymakers for saloons and candy and cigar stores. They appeared to give players gum, cigars, drinks or cheap merchandise in exchange for coins, thus technically avoiding restrictions on "gambling."

As a teen, Art Caille worked at his granddad's factory while attending high school and later Ford Trade Apprentice School. "When my brother and I worked on machines at the factory, we got to keep the money we found hung up on the springs," he said.

Caille also serviced slot machines around Detroit, including those at Western Golf & Country Club in Redford Township.

"It's kind of strange," Caille said, "to visit Western today and remember working on their slot machines that long ago."

The family business was sold in 1937 to Fuller-Johnson Co., which manufactured Johnson and Evinrude outboard motors.

Caille became a draftsman, working at Ford Motor Co. and later Ex-Cell-O Corp. Still later, he was a partner in companies such as R&D Tools Co. in Detroit and Farmington Hills before becoming a manufacturer's representative. Now retired, Caille divides his time between homes in Dearborn and Pompano Beach, Fla.

Caille said that while today's electronic slot machines aren't as attractively crafted, they are probably easier to monitor to prevent rigging.

"Now it's all controlled by computer chips," he said. "In the old days, store and saloon keepers would "real-strip" the machine," which meant covering winning characters such as cherries with losers like lemons, Caille said.

Fond of traveling, Art Caille also likes to gather information about the Caille brothers, their products and companies and about slot machine history. He has met with the scions of other slot machine notables, such as Marshall Fey and Tony Mills, at shows in Las Vegas.

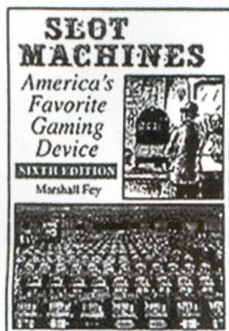
Other pastimes? "I love to play bingo, but not playing the slots," Caille said.

"We've tried to go to the new MGM a couple of times, but it's been too crowded and hard to park, so far.

"And, I still haven't found a Caille slot machine I want to buy. I go to the auctions, but they get up too high."



Tony Mills (youngest son of Herbert Mills, Jr.), Art Caille and Marshall Fey



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THE IMPORTANCE OF C.O.C.A CONVENTIONS

by Bill Howard

Sadly, it would appear that the great American coin-op frontier, like the good old 5¢ cigar, is a thing of the past. As many long time dealers and collectors have voiced, Mike Gorski and Ken Ruben to name a few, the chance of beating the bushes and building a formidable collection has become a rapidly closing window of opportunity. Antique Malls now resemble wastelands. Auctioneers today could find a role in a production of “the Outcasts of Poker Flats” when it comes to attracting coin-op enthusiasts. A big event in our world seems to be news of a large collector liquidation.

So, where are all the machines to be had? They are in the houses of current collectors.

Another problem I have noticed is the informational void that has resulted from the deterioration of coin-op shows and the emergence of EBAY. Through shows and collector fraternalizing it was once easy to “track” where good machines were and they by keep track of their availability. This ability has lessened, and EBAY sales result in more and more machines disappearing into the night wind.

What, then, do we do. Invade the homes of collectors for a look at machines we don’t know are there. Fat chance!

What we can do is embrace good news and a much needed fresh opportunity - our C.O.C.A. Conventions. What these conventions allow us is the unique oppor-

tunity to visit homes that open up to us with great collections of machines so we have the refreshing change to (1) know where they are, (2) enjoy seeing them, (3) possibly buy or trade for those we seek, or (4) make our interest known to the host collector if his mind changes and he wants to sell the machine in the future.

But wait! What sane collector wants to open his house and collection to a herd of buffalos? Organizational and security concerns are almost mind-boggling.

My efforts in helping the Convention Committee to set up the first C.O.C.A. Convention in Cleveland involved trying to convince collectors to open their homes in a safe, organized way to fellow collectors. It was not easy. Eventually, Mike Gorski, the Godfather of Westlake, agreed to give it a shot. I think he should be commended for what has become a very successful trend. Our club members have since had the opportunity to attend two great conventions and visit some of the greatest American collections without one incident or problem, and the trend seems likely to continue. Wonderful conventions are in the works for other areas of the country.

So what we have is a new open door bringing light to the world of coin-op collectors that has seen many doors of collecting close in recent years. I urge all club members to take advantage of this opportunity and attend as many future conventions as possible.

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THE RIVALRY SURROUNDING THE “FREE PLAY BELL RINGER VENDORS”

by the late Ken Rounds

To begin with, Hawkeye Novelty of Des Moines, Iowa and Northwestern of Morris, Illinois were the only manufacturers of the “Free Play” vendors. T.A. Wittern, Hawkeye president, in 1938 produced the first “Free Play” vendor and it worked on the following principle. A notched ratchet both above and below the vending wheel turned until released to ring a bell on the 9th vend. Then the mechanism released for a free vend. Northwestern attempted to compete with their own version of the NW 39 Bell. They discontinued manufacture shortly thereafter when as the story goes, Mr. Wittern entered Northwestern offices with a sledge hammer. This was his way of persuading them to stop production.

The photo shows the 2 vendors. The Porcelain Hawkeye is on the left of the Northwestern. These are in my collection and both work fully as intended. The “Free Play” varied somewhat with the machines. The Hawkeye did not return the coin, but gave a free vend. The Northwestern returned your penny on the 9th play giving you a choice of removing it or running it through again.

In conclusion, Mr. Wittern promised retailers to buy

back the machines if they did not outsell the other vendors in merchandise. He claimed that he never had to pick up a machine!

People liked to gamble on ringing the bell. They often emptied a machine in one evening. Two examples of American ingenuity. These vendors are fairly tough to find in full working mechanical condition. The Porcelain Hawkeye with original decal and “Bell Ringer” mechanism intact is virtually unobtainable in today’s marketplace of vendors. Try locating one.



The Porcelain Hawkeye is on the left of the Northwestern.

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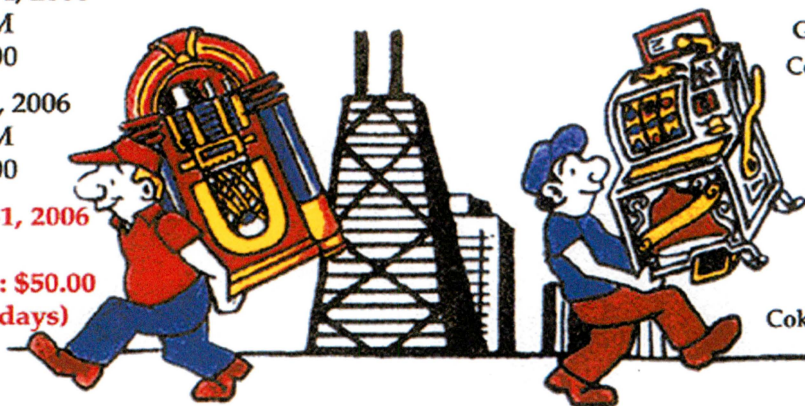
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FOR SALE: Just picked up 32 issues of Marketplace Magazines. Most are 1977, some earlier...loaded with photos, prices, information and much more of early pinballs, slot, trade stimulators, vending machines and arcade machines. Great resource and a lot of fun to read. Price is \$10. each plus \$2. shipping each....or \$299. delivered to any of the continental U.S. States.

Paul Hindin, 3712 West Scenic Ave., Mequon, WI 53092;
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FOR SALE: Replacement back doors for both the short case Pulver and the Yellow Zeno machines. Pulver doors, \$125. and Zeno \$100. Very limited quantity. Free shipping in U.S.

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WANTED: Master penny drop machine. Reproduction OK but original preferred. Columbus B with slug rejector. Re-conditioned OK but nice original condition preferred. Please contact: Steve Kane, (240) 354-7794 or
Email: LUVGUMBALLS@YAHOO.COM

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Bob Levy, 2802 Centre Street, Pennsauken, NJ 08109 or
Phone: (856) 663-2554

WANTED: Junker Bally Spark Plug for parts. Also wheel layout or picture for Griswold cigar wheel.

Keith W. Amundjoio, 1034 Jenks,
St. Paul, Minnesota 55106
Phone: (651) 776-9784, Email: geela1034@nsm.com

FOR SALE: 1) Individual keys available for Columbus barrel locks --\$6.00 each. Pulver keys (including 2A, 3A, 6A, 10A and 11A)--\$7.00 each. All keys are re-cut, not original. 2) COLUMBUS globe gaskets--\$2.50 each (will fit many other machines also.) Please indicate if you want top or bottom gasket. BONUS--Receive a free extra all purpose gasket with the purchase of three or more Columbus gaskets. All prices plus postage.

Jack Freund, P.O. Box 4, Springfield, WI 53176;
Phone: (262) 203-0036 or Email: jbgum@msn.com

WANTED: Serious collector paying top \$\$\$ for gum and peanut machines and trade stimulators. Especially early, unique, and rare machines. One piece or entire collection. Strong interest in small breath pellet machines and early Pulver's. Also buying parts.

Chad Boekelheide,
Phone: (605) 887-3391 or Email: www.chadscoinop.com

WANTED: Pulver tall cases, short cases, green, orange or crinkle red. Any other items related to Pulver. Also L-shaped chocolate and other gum machines. Ron Pulver, W3524 Raddatz Rd., Cambria, WI 53923;
Phone: (920) 348-5841 or (608) 225-9702

FOR SALE: 153 issues of Loose Change magazines including number 1 (almost a complete set with some duplicates), 52 issues of Coin slot (some early issues and an assortment of others), 10 Classic Amusements, 9 Slot Box, 20 miscellaneous coin machine magazines - Total 244 - all in excellent condition. \$750.00 plus shipping. Paul Crain, 18818 - 62nd Ave NW, Stanwood, WA 98292
Phone: (360) 652-3481 or Email: phcrain@wavecable.com

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